

REMARKS

Claims 1-9, 12-22, 25-35, 38 and 39 are pending in this application. All of the pending claims are rejected. Claims 1, 14 and 27 are currently rejected. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

All of the pending claims are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Albert* in view of *McRae*. Both references were discussed in the previous response, including why *McRae* fails to teach processing one field of the data packet header in parallel with multiple filter operations at Figure 12, column 5, lines 24-47, and column 9, lines 19-41. The Office now asserts (at page 9 of the OA) that *McRae* teaches the recited feature in Figure 6, column 5, lines 62-66, and column 9, lines 19-41. Because *McRae* uses the term “field” in a substantially distinct manner from the present application throughout, Applicant respectfully traverses. *McRae* specifically states at column 5, lines 27-29, “the packet header involved in the packet classification is **divided into sections (fields) such as 16 bit portions.**” (emphasis added) In other words, *McRae*’s “field” could be any x-bit portion of the header, including a part of an address, or part of a destination address combined with part of a protocol identifier, or any other arbitrary portion of the header. This is not how “field” is understood by those of ordinary skill in the art. A “field” is ordinarily understood to be a specific bit or bits which are related in some way and constitute a complete thing, e.g., a source address field is the entire source address, not just a portion of it. Taking into account *McRae*’s unconventional definition of “field” in reading the cited passages, the Office’s position is actually that splitting a source address into two distinct segments and then separately processing those segments (as taught by *McRae*) is equivalent to processing the entire source address (or other field) with multiple filter operations (in accordance with limitation recited in the claims). Reconsideration is therefore requested.

Despite the distinction described above, in the interest of expediting prosecution and allowance of this application, claims 1, 14 and 27 have been amended to emphasize the distinction by reciting “each filter operation processing the field in its entirety.” Applicant asserts that the Specification of this application consistently uses the term “field” in the manner ordinarily understood by those of skill in the art, and could not reasonably be interpreted as using the unusual McRae definition. Therefore, the Specification in its entirety support the claim amendments. Claims 2-9, 12-14, 15-22, 25, 26, 28-35, 38 and 39 are dependent claims which further distinguish the invention, and which are allowable for the same reasons as their respective base claims. Withdrawal of the rejection of all pending claims is therefore requested.

For the sake of completeness, it should be noted that the Office concedes that Albert does not teach that one field of a data packet is processed in parallel by multiple filter operations, and that at column 9, lines 19-21, McRae specifically states that “at packet classification time, a packet field value is sectioned into fields and entered into their respective first lookup tables.” In other words, each field is entered into only one lookup table. This contrasts with the presently claimed invention which would enter the same field into multiple lookup tables for parallel filtering, assuming lookup tables were being used for filtering. Claim 1 recites this distinguishing feature as “performing at least two of a plurality of filter operations on the same data field in the data packet in accordance with the retrieved filter result, whereby one field of the data packet is processed in parallel with multiple filter operations.” Similarly, claim 14 recites “performing at least two of a plurality of filter operations on the same data field in the data packet in accordance with the retrieved filter result, whereby one field of the data packet is processed in parallel with multiple filter operations,” and claim 27 recites “performing at least two of the filter operations on the same data field in the data packet in accordance with the

retrieved filter result, whereby one field of the data packet is processed in parallel with multiple filter operations.” Withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1, 14 and 27 based on the combination of Albert in view of McRae is therefore requested. Again, claims 2-9, 12-13, 15-22, 25-26, 28-35, 38 and 39 are dependent claims which further distinguish the inventions, and which are allowable for the same reasons as their respective base claims. Withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-9, 12-22, 25-35, 38 and 39 based on Albert in view of McRae is therefore also requested.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited. Should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned, Applicants' Attorney at 978-264-4001 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date

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Docket No. 120-098
Dd: 6/6/2007